Sl. No.	Circle	Number of Post Offices opened during 2005-06
11.	North East	1
12.	Punjab	2
13.	Rajasthan	10
14.	Tamil Nadu	2
15.	Uttaranchal	2
16.	West Bengal	2
	Total :	57

(b) A request received for opening of a new post office, is examined as per norms prescribed by the Department. In consonance with the policy directives of the 10th Five Year Plan, plan targets are not being allotted for opening of new post offices from the year 2004-05. Therefore, if justification for opening a post office is found, it can only be opened by relocation of an existing post office which is no longer justified, on the Departmental norms in its present location.

Connecting villages through wireless phone

†744. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in connecting villages with telephone services and the number of villages where this service is not available at present;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government are in the process of connecting villages with wireless phones;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the States selected for the said purpose; and

(e) by when the work regarding connecting all the villages of the country with wireless phones would be completed?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (e) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 for provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 66,822 unconnected eligible villages in the country using the Wireless in Local Loop as well as satellite technologies. This excludes villages having less than 100 population and lying in thick forest area/naxalite infested area etc.

A statement indicating the State-wise status of provision of VPTs in these 66,822 villages is enclosed (*See* below). Out of these villages, 17,182 villages have already been provided with VPTs as on 31st December, 2005. Remaining 49,640 villages will be provided with VPTs progressively by November, 2007.

Statement

Status of provision of village public telephones in eligible villages

Sl. No.	Name of the Service Area	Total No. of eligible uncovered villages	VPTs on DSPT*	VPTs on WLL**	VPTs Provided Upto 31.12.2005	Balance remaining uncovered
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	0	0	0	0	0
2.	Andhra Pradesh	1,074	115	959	237	837
3.	Assam	8,931	279	8,652	2,366	6,565
4.	Bihar	0	0	0	0	0
5.	Jharkhand	1,694	1,694	0	30	1,664
6.	Gujarat	4,144	0	4,144	1,965	2,179
7.	Haryana	0	0	0	0	0
8.	Himachal Pradesh	1,002	275	727	234	768
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	1,755	465	1,290	222	1,533
10.	Karnataka	0	0	0	0	0
11.	Kerala	0	0	0	0	0
12.	Madhya Pradesh	11,894	443	11,451	4,402	7,492
13.	Chhattisgarh	5,043	88	4,955	892	4,151
14.	Maharashtra	6,441	496	5,945	2,189	4,252
15.	North East-I	2,128	578	1,550	77	2,051

Sl. No.	Name of the Service Area	Total No. of eligible uncovered villages	VPTs on DSPT*	VPTs on WLL**	VPTs Provided Upto 31.12.2005	Balance remaining uncovered
16.	North East-II	1,550	1,289	261	30	1,520
17.	Orissa	4,899	4,899	0	0	4,899
18.	Punjab	0	0	0	0	0
19.	Rajasthan	12,386	18	12,368	4,332	8,054
20.	Tamil Nadu	0	0	0	0	0
21.	Uttar Pradesh (East)	0	0	0	0	0
22.	Uttar Pradesh (West)	0	0	0	0	0
23.	Uttaranchal	3,881	3,544	337	206	3,675
24.	West Bengal	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL:	66,822	14,183	52,639	17,182	49,640

*DSPT—Digital Satellite Phone Terminal

**WLL—Wireless in Local Loop

Utilization of funds allocated for rural telephony

745. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of Rs. 8,000 crore collected under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), only Rs. 1,800 crore have been used so far to provide rural telephony;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of steps being contemplated by Government to use the remaining portion in promotion of telephony in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) An amount of Rs. 7,254.56 crore has been collected upto March, 2005 under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF). Anticipated collection for 2005-06 is Rs. 3,303 crore. Till 31-12-2005, an amount of Rs. 3,216.39 crore has been disbursed to telecom service providers towards provision of rural telephony.